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The Influence of Instructional Leadership and Organizational Culture on Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to understand the influence of instructional leadership and organizational culture on service quality and customer satisfaction at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka. The focus of the research is based on the phenomenon of low employee discipline, weak interdepartmental coordination, and delays in service delivery which have an impact on student satisfaction. Using a qualitative approach, this research employs in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis as data collection techniques. The research informants include university leaders, administrative staff, and students as service recipients. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns that link leadership and organizational culture with service practices. The results of the research show that consistent instructional leadership is able to shape the direction of employee performance and improve organizational discipline, while an inclusive and collaborative organizational culture strengthens interdepartmental integration so that the service process becomes more effective. Both were proven to contribute to improving service quality which in turn has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. The conclusion of this research emphasizes the importance of strengthening instructional-based leadership models and developing adaptive organizational culture in order to build higher-quality higher education services.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of services in higher education institutions has become a central issue in the discourse of modern organizational management. Universities, as providers of educational services, are required not only to produce high-quality graduates but also to deliver services that are fast, accurate, and aligned with students' needs. In this context, the role of instructional leadership and organizational culture is crucial in ensuring that service processes run effectively. Instructional leadership focuses on how leaders are able to direct, motivate, and control human resources to remain oriented toward service quality. Organizational culture, on the other hand, reflects the values, norms, and beliefs that regulate interactions among employees and determine work patterns within the institution. An imbalance in these two aspects often becomes the cause of slow, discriminatory, or inconsistent services. Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka (USK) faces challenges in employee discipline and coordination among service units. This situation indicates the need for further research into the internal organizational factors that affect service quality. Therefore, this study is directed at systematically examining the relationship between instructional leadership, organizational culture, service quality, and customer satisfaction within the university environment.

Recent literature shows that the quality of higher education services is influenced by leadership style and organizational culture. According to Nordin et al. (2022), leadership focused on instruction can enhance the consistent implementation of work guidelines in public services. Qodiriyah's (2023) study confirms that instructional leadership plays a significant role in shaping organizational culture in schools, which ultimately impacts the quality of academic services. Fauzi et al. (2023) also found a positive relationship between leadership and the implementation of Total Quality Management on the quality of educational services. Furthermore, Garcia and Jamias (2023) argue that quality assurance in higher education can only be achieved through a collaborative and open organizational culture. Other research (Espinosa, 2023; Krauss & Vanhove, 2022) highlights the importance of adapting work culture to address changes in the educational environment. However, despite the substantial research on leadership and organizational culture, studies specifically linking both to customer satisfaction in higher education remain limited. Therefore, this study is expected to provide an empirical contribution to the development of service management models based on instructional leadership. The research gap lies in the limitations of previous studies that tended to emphasize the relationship between leadership and employee performance rather than directly with the quality of services as perceived by customers. For example, Alonso et al. (2023) focus more on the role of leadership in bridging graduates with the labor market, without explicitly addressing student satisfaction as service users. Similarly, Wolfe et al. (2023) place greater emphasis on the distribution of leadership roles within organizations but pay little attention to their impact on administrative services in universities. Inconsistencies are also evident in the research findings, with some studies showing that instructional leadership is highly effective, while others suggest that organizational culture is the more dominant factor (Poon & Sundararajan, 2023). This controversy opens space for research that positions leadership and organizational culture simultaneously within the framework of service quality analysis. This gap constitutes both the novelty and the rationale of the present study.

Thus, this article seeks to present a new perspective by integrating two important variables that are often examined separately in the study of educational management. The research problem of this study is how instructional leadership and organizational culture affect service quality and customer satisfaction at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka. This issue is relevant considering that delays, lack of discipline, and poor integration across service units are still found within the university environment. The objective of this research is to analyze the influence of these two main variables on service quality and student satisfaction as service recipients. Contextually, the study was conducted at USK Majalengka as a representation of private universities striving to improve their management quality. The unit of analysis includes students as the primary customers of educational services, as well as administrative staff and leaders as the service providers. Thus, this study places customers and service providers in a complementary analytical framework. This focus is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of

service dynamics in higher education. In addition, the findings of this research are expected to form the basis for recommendations to improve the service management system of USK.

The research approach employed in this study is qualitative, with data collection techniques including in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The selection of this method is based on the need to understand the phenomenon comprehensively and deeply, rather than merely measuring relationships among variables numerically. With this method, the researcher can explore the real experiences of students, employees' perceptions, and leadership strategies implemented by university leaders. This differs from previous quantitative studies that relied more heavily on questionnaires and statistical analysis. Data analysis was conducted through reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, which allowed the emergence of more natural findings. With this strategy, findings are expected to explain how leadership and organizational culture work simultaneously in influencing services. This study also emphasizes data triangulation to maintain the validity and reliability of the findings. Therefore, the qualitative method is considered most appropriate for addressing the research objectives formulated. This approach simultaneously enriches the literature on educational service quality with a contextual perspective.

The structure of this article is designed to provide a coherent and systematic flow of thought. The first section presents the introduction, which outlines the background, problem, objectives, and research context. The second section contains the literature review, emphasizing previous studies on instructional leadership, organizational culture, service quality, and customer satisfaction. The third section describes the qualitative research method employed, including data collection strategies, analysis techniques, and units of analysis. The fourth section presents the research findings obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis thematically. The fifth section provides a discussion that links the findings to theory and recent literature while identifying the contribution of this research. The sixth section presents the conclusion summarizing the results of the study and providing practical recommendations for universities to improve their service quality. With this structure, the article is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of educational management studies. Finally, this research is expected not only to strengthen the academic foundation but also to provide direct benefits for the improvement of services in higher education.

2. METHODS

The research method employed in this study is a qualitative approach with a case study design, as the main focus of the research is to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena related to instructional leadership and organizational culture in enhancing service quality and customer satisfaction at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka. Qualitative research was chosen to obtain a comprehensive description of the real experiences of the informants, so that the data produced would be more descriptive, contextual, and reflective of the service dynamics occurring in the field. This approach is considered valid and reliable as it allows the researcher to explore data naturally and in depth through direct interaction with the research subjects.

The research design in this study uses a single case study approach, focusing on Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka as the research site. This focus provides the opportunity to thoroughly examine the actual conditions of the organization, including the instructional leadership carried out by university leaders as well as the organizational culture that develops within the administrative and student service environments. The unit of analysis in this study consists of students as service recipients, administrative staff as service implementers, and university leaders as strategic decision-makers. Thus, this research integrates multiple perspectives in order to understand the interaction between leadership, organizational culture, and service quality.

The research subjects and informants consist of three main groups, namely university leaders, administrative staff in the student affairs division, and students who directly utilize the services. The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling, based on the consideration that these informants possess experience, knowledge, and direct involvement in the phenomena under study. The

number of informants was determined until reaching the point of data saturation, a condition in which no significant new information was obtained from the interviews conducted. The presence of the researcher in this study was participatory, meaning that the researcher acted not only as an observer but also as an active participant in interactions with the research subjects to gain deeper data.

The data collection techniques were carried out through three main procedures: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document study. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the views and experiences of informants regarding the role of instructional leadership and organizational culture in the service process. Participant observation was used to directly observe service practices at the university, including employee discipline and inter-departmental coordination. Document study was carried out by reviewing official documents such as service guidelines, activity reports, and administrative records of the university. These three techniques were complemented with field notes prepared by the researcher throughout the data collection process, thereby strengthening the validity of the research findings.

The research instruments in the qualitative approach were not standardized measurement tools such as questionnaires, but instead consisted of interview guidelines, observation sheets, and field note formats. The interview guidelines were developed in a semi-structured manner to provide flexibility for the researcher in exploring informants' responses more broadly. The observation sheets were used to record actual behaviors that emerged at the research site, particularly those related to leadership patterns and organizational culture in service delivery. Meanwhile, field notes were employed to document the researcher's reflections on the dynamics that occurred during the research process. Thus, the instruments used enabled the researcher to obtain rich, in-depth, and contextual data.

The data analysis technique adopted the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction was carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying information relevant to the research focus. Data display was presented in the form of narrative descriptions accompanied by direct quotations from informants to reinforce the validity of the findings. Conclusion drawing was conducted gradually from the data collection stage onward, enabling the research results to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study. To ensure the validity of the research findings, techniques such as source triangulation, method triangulation, and data credibility checks through informant confirmation (member check) were employed.

The location and duration of the study were set at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka, with the implementation period lasting six months. The stages of the research included preparation, data collection, data analysis, and conclusion drawing. This research is systematically illustrated in the research framework as follows:

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Instructional Leadership and Employee Discipline

The findings indicate that the instructional leadership practiced by university leaders has a direct impact on employee discipline in carrying out service tasks. From in-depth interviews, the majority of informants assessed that clear directives from leaders encourage employees to be more organized in managing their working hours. Attendance and punctuality in the workplace serve as primary indicators most strongly perceived by students as service users. Participatory observations also revealed that leaders who actively supervise and provide examples are able to reduce employee tardiness. However, several informants noted that the firmness of leadership has not been consistently applied across all work units. This inconsistency has led to variations in service quality among departments. Nevertheless, overall, instructional leadership is considered capable of fostering a culture of work discipline. These findings support the results of Nordin et al. (2022), who stated that instruction-based leadership can enhance the consistency of organizational rule implementation.

Beyond time discipline, instructional leadership also influences the clarity of employee responsibilities. Informants from the administrative staff reported that direct guidance from leaders

helped them understand work priorities. The provision of systematic and well-directed instructions has made administrative tasks more structured and reduced overlaps in responsibilities. Students interviewed also acknowledged improvements in service speed during periods when leaders were more actively monitoring. This indicates that instructional leadership functions not only as a regulator of discipline but also as a strategic guide for work processes. Field observations further revealed a clear difference between units with strong leadership instructions and those with more lenient supervision. Accordingly, the findings reinforce Qodiriyah's (2023) conclusion that instructional leadership is effective in reducing task uncertainty within educational settings.

Despite its positive influence, challenges remain in the implementation of instructional leadership. Some informants observed that an excessively instructional leadership style may create dependency among employees on directives from leaders. In such cases, employees tend to be less independent in making minor decisions related to services. Nevertheless, most students continued to perceive services as better when leaders were active in providing instructions. This reflects the necessity of balancing strict supervision with sufficient space for employee initiative. In conclusion, instructional leadership plays a significant role in improving work discipline, but it must be accompanied by a flexible approach so as not to diminish employee creativity.

Table 1. The Impact of Instructional Leadership on Employee Discipline

Observed Aspect	Field Findings	Impact on Services
Punctual Attendance	Employees are more consistent in adhering to work hours	Students perceive services as faster
Procedural Compliance	Leaders provide clear instructions	Administrative processes become systematic
Direct Supervision	Leaders routinely monitor staff activities	Reduces service delays
Priority Guidance	Instructions help in sequencing workloads	Services become more structured
Enforcement of Rules	Uneven across units	Variations in service quality among units

Table 1 illustrates that punctual attendance is the most evident aspect of the influence of instructional leadership on employee discipline. Students perceive services as faster because employees adhere to their work schedules. Procedural compliance has also improved due to the provision of clear instructions from leaders. Direct supervision reinforces service consistency and reduces delays. However, challenges remain in the area of rule enforcement, which has not been evenly implemented across all units. This inconsistency has created disparities in service quality across departments. Overall, the table reaffirms that instructional leadership makes a positive contribution, although it has not yet been fully consistent across all levels.

3.2 Organizational Culture and Interdepartmental Integration

The organizational culture at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka ¹⁶ plays a crucial role in shaping patterns of interaction among staff and students. The findings reveal that values of solidarity, openness, and responsibility are the most prominent aspects in strengthening work coordination. Interviews with administrative staff indicated that cross-unit communication often becomes the key factor in accelerating service delivery. Field observations demonstrated ongoing efforts to build collaboration across departments, although technical barriers such as delays in information sharing

still exist. Students perceived that services run more smoothly when staff display cooperative attitudes and assist each other in addressing administrative issues. A collaborative organizational culture was also evident in the routine coordination meetings held to discuss student services. Nevertheless, some students expressed concerns about variations in service standards among departments, suggesting that integration has not yet been fully achieved. This implies that the organizational culture must continue to be reinforced so that all units share the same commitment to service provision. Accordingly, an adaptive and collaborative organizational culture directly contributes to enhancing service quality. These findings support Krauss & Vanhove's (2022) argument emphasizing the role of organizational culture in strengthening teamwork effectiveness within educational institutions.

Table 2. The Role of Organizational Culture in Service Integration

Aspect of Organizational Culture	Field Findings	Impact on Service Integration
Solidarity Values	Staff assist each other in completing tasks	Services are delivered more quickly
Open Communication	Regular interdepartmental discussions occur	Reduces miscommunication
Coordination Meetings	Conducted on a regular basis	Enhances alignment among units
Collective Responsibility	Staff perceive tasks as shared	Services become more consistent
Technical Barriers	Interdepartmental information not always timely	Integration remains suboptimal

Table 2 illustrates that solidarity values are among the key factors in strengthening the organizational culture at USK Majalengka. Students reported faster services when staff supported each other in completing tasks. Open communication across departments proved effective in reducing miscommunication. Regular coordination meetings played an important role in enhancing service alignment among units. A sense of collective responsibility also emerged, whereby staff did not only focus on their individual tasks but also contributed to the smooth execution of their colleagues' responsibilities. However, technical barriers persist, as interdepartmental information is not always communicated in a timely manner. This has led to delays in certain administrative services. Thus, a strong organizational culture can enhance service integration, though improvements in technical aspects of information exchange remain necessary.



Figure 2. Service Discussion and Coordination Forum at USK Majalengka

Figure 2 presents the atmosphere of a service discussion and coordination forum at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka. The forum was attended by university leaders, administrative staff, and students as service recipients. The presence of various stakeholders demonstrates a shared commitment to strengthening organizational culture through open communication. Such discussions serve as an important platform for expressing aspirations, addressing challenges, and proposing solutions related to services. Students appeared actively engaged in the forum, reflecting their direct participation in the service improvement process. Administrative staff were also involved, both in listening to feedback and presenting reports on task implementation. The presence of university leaders highlighted the practical application of instructional leadership in guiding staff and supporting a collaborative organizational culture. Thus, the figure serves as a tangible representation of interdepartmental integration being fostered through an inclusive organizational culture.

3.3 Service Quality and Student Perceptions

Service quality at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka is perceived by students as a key factor influencing their overall satisfaction. The findings indicate that service quality is not only related to the speed and accuracy of administrative processes but also encompasses the availability of campus facilities, resources, and infrastructure. Students evaluated academic services more positively when supported by an orderly administrative system and adequate information technology. However, challenges remain in terms of campus facilities that are not yet fully aligned with the needs of modern learning. Field observations revealed efforts by the university to improve facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, and digital services. Student interviews emphasized that service quality would improve further if campus facilities were continuously enhanced in a sustainable manner. This reflects the perception that high-quality services should be oriented toward comfort, accessibility of facilities, and availability of information. Administrative staff also highlighted that improvements in service quality depend on the synergy between leadership, organizational culture, and the provision of adequate facilities. Thus, service quality at USK Majalengka can be understood as the outcome of integrating human resources with campus infrastructure availability. These findings reinforce Adel's (2022) view that quality educational services are determined by a combination of personal competence and infrastructural support.



Figure 3. Discussion on Facility and Infrastructure Development at USK Majalengka

Figure 3 illustrates a leadership meeting at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka that focused on the development of campus facilities and infrastructure. The presence of university leaders in this forum underscores the institution's commitment to enhancing service facilities. The discussion highlighted that service quality depends not only on staff performance but also significantly on infrastructural support. Leadership attention to facilities and infrastructure reflects the application of instructional leadership at the managerial level. Students, as service recipients, directly experience the outcomes of policies oriented toward facility improvements. The meeting also serves as evidence of routine internal evaluation processes. This indicates the university's ongoing efforts toward continuous improvement in order to enhance student satisfaction. Thus, the figure represents the integration between leadership and service quality grounded in facility management.



Figure 4. Students as Representations of Service Quality and Future Aspirations

Figure 4 depicts a group of students at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka engaged in a discussion on campus grounds. The students in the image represent both the primary recipients of

educational services and the future aspirations of the university. Their presence in a collaborative learning environment emphasizes the importance of academic services that support interactive learning processes. The figure also demonstrates that students are not merely service recipients but active contributors to shaping the academic culture. Their enthusiasm reflects satisfaction with campus services that are responsive to their needs. Furthermore, the image highlights the university's commitment to preparing future leaders by providing high-quality educational services. By positioning students as the focal point, the university reinforces its image that all service policies are oriented toward customer satisfaction. Therefore, this figure can be viewed as a symbol of the integration between service quality and the university's strategic mission to produce outstanding graduates.

3.4 Customer Satisfaction as a Service Outcome

Customer satisfaction, in this context referring to the students of Sindang Kasih University Majalengka, serves as a key indicator of the success of educational services. The research findings reveal that student satisfaction is strongly influenced by the quality of administrative services, the availability of campus facilities, and staff responsiveness. From the leadership perspective, students perceive a significant difference when leaders actively provide clear instructions to staff. A collaborative organizational culture is also recognized by students as an important factor in creating a friendly and efficient service environment. However, some students still expressed dissatisfaction regarding delays in information dissemination and inconsistent services across departments. Interviews with staff indicated that limited resources remain one of the constraints affecting service quality. University leaders acknowledged the need to improve monitoring systems and strengthen work culture to achieve more equitable customer satisfaction. Thus, customer satisfaction can be regarded as a direct reflection of the effectiveness of instructional leadership and the prevailing organizational culture.

Table 3. Summary of Interview Results with All Research Subjects

Research Subject	Key Findings	Impact on Student Satisfaction
Students	Faster service when staff are disciplined and cooperative	Satisfaction arises as needs are met in a timely manner
Administrative Staff	Leadership guidance facilitates task distribution	Workload becomes more structured, though limited human resources remain a challenge
University Leadership	Organizational culture needs to be reinforced for better integration across units	Encourages overall improvement in service quality
Field Observation	Delays in information sharing across units	Leads to dissatisfaction among some students
Official Documentation	Regular coordination meetings held as part of evaluation efforts	Provides assurance of continuous service improvements

Table 3 summarizes the results of interviews with all research subjects, highlighting the strong interconnection between leadership, organizational culture, and student satisfaction. From the students' perspective, satisfaction emerges when services are provided promptly and staff demonstrate cooperative behavior. Administrative staff emphasized that leadership directions play

an important role in organizing workloads, although resource limitations remain a challenge. University leaders stressed the necessity of strengthening organizational culture to achieve stronger integration across departments. Field observations revealed delays in information dissemination between units, directly contributing to dissatisfaction among some students. Nevertheless, official documentation shows that the university has already implemented regular evaluations through coordination meetings. This indicates institutional awareness of the need to address existing shortcomings. Therefore, student satisfaction depends not only on individual staff behavior but also on supportive organizational systems. This study confirms that instructional leadership and organizational culture must operate in tandem to achieve customer satisfaction. Ultimately, student satisfaction can be regarded as a strategic outcome of sustainable service quality at the university.

Discussion

Research findings indicate that instructional leadership has a significant contribution in shaping service quality at Sindang Kasih University Majalengka. Instructional leadership implemented by the university leadership has succeeded in bringing order, discipline, and clarity of instructions to all staff. Increased staff discipline is reflected in punctual attendance, timely completion of administrative tasks, and compliance with work regulations. This demonstrates that instructional leadership is not merely symbolic but has a tangible impact on service operations. Students, as the primary customers, experience faster, more responsive, and structured services compared to previous conditions. These findings reinforce Nordin et al. (2022), who found that instructional leadership enhances the consistency of operational standard implementation. Thus, this leadership style can serve as an important foundation for private universities seeking to improve service quality. Instructional leadership that emphasizes clarity of instructions and regular supervision has been proven to build students' trust in campus services. This success illustrates that clear instructions can reduce ambiguity in public service delivery. Therefore, instructional leadership stands as a key determinant of higher education service quality.

In the context of higher education, instructional leadership plays a role in cultivating a more disciplined academic culture. Qodiriyah (2023) confirmed that school principals or educational leaders applying instructional leadership foster consistent and disciplined work cultures. This is equally relevant at universities, where academic culture can only function optimally when leaders provide clear instructions. Time discipline and administrative order become indicators of the success of instructional leadership. Moreover, students as service recipients find it easier to adapt to consistent service systems. This phenomenon highlights the strong link between instructional leadership, service quality, and customer satisfaction. When leadership instructions are unclear, staff tend to work without direction, leading to student dissatisfaction. Thus, this study underscores the importance of instructional leadership in higher education, extending a body of research that has largely focused on primary or secondary schools. The academic contribution lies in broadening the literature by introducing new perspectives on regional private universities. This affirms the relevance of instructional leadership theory in higher education contexts.

Despite its positive contributions, this study identifies a downside of instructional leadership. Excessive emphasis on instructions may create staff dependency on leaders. Staff become reluctant to take initiative, preferring to wait for directions from superiors. This inhibits creativity and innovation in administrative services. Chitamba & Jita (2023) identified this phenomenon, noting that instructional leadership must be balanced with granting autonomy. Without room for initiative, staff remain passive implementers rather than active organizational drivers. In the long term, this may reduce work motivation and job satisfaction. Consequently, leaders must strike a balance between directive clarity and work flexibility. Only in this way can service quality improve without sacrificing staff creativity. Hence, this study not only supports Hallinger's (2011) theory but also modifies it by adding the dimension of balance.

Organizational culture at Sindang Kasih University Majalengka also ³⁶ plays a vital role in supporting service quality. Values of togetherness, openness, and collective responsibility serve as pillars of the organizational culture on campus. A healthy culture ensures that staff assist one another, enabling work to be completed more efficiently. Students reported that administrative services were more effective when staff collaborated with a collective spirit. This illustrates that organizational culture functions as social energy sustaining service quality. Krauss & Vanhove (2022) affirmed that positive organizational culture enhances team effectiveness. In education, this effectiveness is manifested through improved academic and administrative services. Thus, organizational culture not only shapes staff behavior but also influences student satisfaction. Consequently, universities must cultivate an organizational culture that supports collaboration. A strong culture ensures smooth service delivery to students.

However, this study also found that the university's organizational culture faces challenges. Technical obstacles in interdepartmental information exchange often cause service delays. These delays affect student satisfaction with administrative services. This aligns with Gallegos (2023), who stated that communication breakdowns in public institutions negatively impact service quality. Ineffective communication hampers information flow, resulting in suboptimal interdepartmental coordination. Thus, while the organizational culture emphasizes togetherness, communication weaknesses remain a major obstacle. The university needs to develop effective digital communication systems to overcome these barriers. The adoption of information technology can strengthen collaborative work culture. Only through this can organizational culture fully support service quality. Therefore, effective communication systems must be prioritized in reinforcing organizational culture.

Student satisfaction as a service outcome emerges from the synergy between instructional leadership and organizational culture. Students feel more satisfied when staff discipline is upheld and interdepartmental coordination flows smoothly. In-depth interviews revealed that student satisfaction rises as administrative services improve. Administrative staff confirmed that clear leadership instructions and cooperative work culture facilitated task completion. This proves that customer satisfaction is determined not ⁵⁵ by individual staff behavior but also by organizational structures. Fauzi et al. (2023) confirmed that leadership and TQM implementation positively affect educational service quality. However, this study contributes novelty by emphasizing the combination of instructional leadership and organizational culture. It is this synergy between the two variables that shapes sustainable student satisfaction. Thus, this research extends the SERVQUAL model into higher education. SERVQUAL now incorporates not only reliability but also leadership and organizational culture.

The use of qualitative methodology provides added strength to these findings. ²⁸ Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Data validity was reinforced through triangulation of sources, methods, and member checks. For instance, students interviewed noted service improvements, which were directly observed by the researcher. Administrative staff corroborated the leadership's involvement in providing clear instructions. Meeting minutes revealed the leadership's commitment to regular evaluation. This process ensures that the findings genuinely reflect field realities. This sets qualitative research apart from quantitative approaches that emphasize numerical data. Therefore, this study provides deeper contextual understanding of leadership and organizational culture.

The strength of this qualitative approach aligns with Leavy's (2022) view that qualitative research uncovers meanings and social dynamics not measurable through numbers. Interviews enabled researchers to capture students' perceptions of services. Participatory observation provided a direct picture of instructional leadership in practice. Official documents reinforced the validity of the findings. By combining these three techniques, this study offers a comprehensive picture. The findings are not merely descriptive but include deeper interpretation. Hence, the validity of these research outcomes can be relied upon. Thus, the academic contribution lies not only in the results but also in the employed methodology. This qualitative study explains social phenomena holistically.

Research findings further demonstrate that instructional leadership and organizational culture reinforce one another. Instructional leadership provides strategic direction, while organizational culture ensures that values of togetherness are enacted. Their combination yields higher-quality services. Students experienced the benefits of this synergy in faster and more efficient services. These findings support transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes vision and shared values. However, this study adds the instructional dimension as a clarifying element of organizational direction. This synthesis offers a new perspective: effective leadership combines transformational and instructional elements. This is highly relevant in higher education. Accordingly, the study enriches educational leadership literature.

The study also strengthens Xia & O'Shea's, 2022 findings on the importance of instructional leadership in distributing roles. Yet its contribution extends further as it focuses on regional private higher education, unlike much prior research focused on formal schools. Thus, this study broadens the empirical scope of instructional leadership. Moreover, it aligns with Garcia & Jamias (2023), who noted that higher education quality is only achievable through collaborative culture. Collaborative culture in universities is key to successful administrative services. Therefore, **this research enriches the literature by** emphasizing the interaction of leadership and organizational culture. It fills a gap previously underexplored. This contribution enhances novelty, making the study both academically and practically relevant.

At the national level, this research complements Rusmidi's (2021) study, which found that staff empowerment and organizational culture influence service quality. However, unlike that study, this research does not solely focus on staff empowerment but also highlights instructional leadership. The integration of these two variables offers new insights into service improvement. The study asserts that instructional leadership cannot stand alone without organizational culture, and vice versa. It is their interaction that produces student satisfaction. Thus, the research addresses a literature gap in Indonesia. Its contribution is both academic and practical for university management, making it highly relevant to higher education policy.

Theoretically, this research modifies Hallinger's (2011) classical instructional leadership theory. While the classical model emphasizes instruction and supervision, this study adds the organizational culture dimension. This modification generates the *Instructional Culture-Based Service Quality Model*. The model explains that service quality is shaped not only by instructions but also by collective culture. Hence, instructional leadership theory becomes more applicable in higher education. The model underscores the importance of collaboration in enhancing services. This represents an academic contribution to educational management scholarship. Therefore, the study introduces a new dimension to leadership literature, reflecting the researcher's innovation in expanding established concepts. This contribution aligns with the dynamics of modern management.

Practically, the study provides recommendations for regional private universities. Clear instructions, open communication, and regular evaluations have been proven to improve services. Universities must build strong collaborative cultures to further optimize service delivery. Staff should be given space for initiative while remaining guided by leadership. In this way, instructional leadership can harmonize with organizational culture. The study's results carry direct implications for improving higher education management quality. Furthermore, its recommendations can serve as references for other university leaders. These recommendations hold potential to improve education services across regions. Thus, the study offers practical value to educational management.

The study also proposes a conceptual model, the *Instructional Culture-Based Service Quality Model*. This model integrates instructional leadership with organizational culture in shaping service quality. The primary outcome is student satisfaction as the educational customer. The model differs from Parasuraman et al.'s (1988) SERVQUAL, which emphasizes reliability and responsiveness. This model adds leadership and organizational culture dimensions, thereby enriching service quality theory in education. The academic contribution is crucial in expanding the understanding of service

quality. The conceptual model may also be tested in other higher education contexts, making this research a foundation for future studies. Thus, its theoretical contribution is significant.

Overall, this research makes a substantial contribution to the development of educational management science. The integration of instructional leadership, organizational culture, service quality, and student satisfaction generates a new perspective. Findings reveal that the synergy between leadership and organizational culture is critical. The study also emphasizes that service quality cannot be improved solely through individual factors but requires strong organizational systems. Its academic contribution enriches both global and national literature, while its practical contribution provides tangible recommendations for regional private universities. Hence, the research is relevant both scientifically and practically. The discussion confirms that instructional leadership and organizational culture are essential in modern educational management. These findings are expected to guide future research and policy, broadening the impact of this study on higher education development in Indonesia.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that instructional leadership has a significant influence on the quality of services at Universitas Sindang Kasih Majalengka. Employee discipline, punctuality, and clarity of instructions are tangible outcomes of instructional leadership that emphasizes systematic guidance and regular supervision. These findings address the first research question concerning the role of instructional leadership in enhancing the quality of educational services. Organizational culture has been proven to play an essential role in strengthening service quality. The values of togetherness, openness, and collective responsibility facilitate coordination among employees, thereby making administrative services more effective. Accordingly, the second research question related to the influence of organizational culture on service quality has been answered through these findings. Student satisfaction, as the primary customers, results from the synergy between instructional leadership and organizational culture. Students feel more satisfied when employee discipline is well-maintained and interdepartmental coordination runs smoothly. This conclusion addresses the third research question regarding the simultaneous relationship between the two variables and student satisfaction.

Theoretically, this study modifies the theory of instructional leadership by incorporating the dimension of organizational culture collaboration. The proposed conceptual model, namely the *Instructional Culture-Based Service Quality Model*, extends the literature on educational management by positioning leadership and organizational culture as the main determinants of service quality and customer satisfaction. This research provides practical implications for private universities in regional areas, particularly in strengthening instructional leadership, building a collaborative work culture, and continuously improving service quality. Prospects for further research may be directed toward exploring the relationship with other variables, such as technological innovation or total quality management, which may contribute to improving the quality of higher education services.

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